



MESSAGE

STUDY GUIDE

GROUP MATERIAL

SONGS

Examining the text & our hearts:

Bible Reading: Ephesians 6:10-17a, 1 Thess. 5:8-9

- Finally, be strengthened by the Lord & by his vast strength. 11 Put on the full armor of God so that you can stand against the schemes of the devil. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh & blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this darkness, against evil, spiritual forces in the heavens. 13 For this reason take up the full armor of God, so that you may be able to resist in the evil day, & having prepared everything, to take your stand. 14 Stand, therefore, with truth like a belt around your waist, righteousness like armor on your chest, 15 & your feet sandaled with readiness for the gospel of peace. 16 In every situation take up the shield of faith with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. 17 *Take the helmet of salvation...* (Eph. 6:10-17a CSB)
- “Since we belong to the day, let us be self-controlled and put on the armor of faith and love, and *a helmet of the hope of salvation*. 9 For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thess. 5:8-9)

I. The Helmet of Salvation was worn by the Lord as the Divine Warrior (Isa. 59:17)

- YAHWEH “saw that there was no man...so his own arm brought salvation, and his own righteousness supported him. 17 He put on righteousness as body armor, and *a helmet of salvation on his head...*” (Is. 69:16-17)

A. Salvation is something God brings ~ clothed in his salvation, he rescues, redeems, revives, renews, & restores us

? “[I]t obviously does not refer to *any salvation that [God] received, but to the salvation that he brings...*” [Roy E. Ciampa, “*Missio Dei...in Ephesians*,” J. C. Laasma (ed.) *NT Theology in the*

Light of the Church's Mission, p. 242]

? “Throughout Isaiah, *salvation* is always closely linked to *God's righteousness, his promise-keeping faithfulness*. [Iain M. Duguid, *Whole Armor of God*, pp. 82]

B. God's salvation is sure and unconquerable ~ you have to see what he has done & is still doing for you.

? “*Salvation is eternal security with Christ, as well as a full inheritance* given through the relationship with Christ. It includes blessings, status, & identity—everything we've received that enables us to live victoriously for Him.” [Priscilla Shirer, *Fervent: A Woman's Battle Plan*, p. 47]

? “With the helmet of salvation firmly in place, you will be *surrounded*—both mentally & emotionally—*by the unassailable truth of all that is yours in Jesus Christ*.” [Rick Renner, *Spiritual Weapons...Defeat the Enemy*, p. 24]

II. 'Take the Helmet of Salvation' is an Urgent Command (Eph. 6:17)

? “*Take the helmet of salvation...*” (Eph. 6:17a)

? “...The imperative take...is...parallel to the imperative stand (v. 14)...It could actually mean 'grab'...The middle voice indicates that believers are *responsible for grabbing the helmet*. (Harold Hoehner, *Ephesians*, p. 849)

? “The *arist imperative* is an urgent command: ‘Do this now! Don't delay!’”

? “The Christian wears [the helmet of salvation] in the sense of his *being the receiver and possessor of deliverance, clothed and armed in the victory of his Head*.” (J.O.F. Murray, *Cambridge Greek NT for Schools & Colleges*, p.)

III. Take Salvation as Your Helmet

A. Salvation is your helmet

? “In *Ephesians*, Paul pictures believers putting on the helmet of salvation to protect themselves in the conflict with the enemy. The genitive is one of apposition, meaning, ‘*the helmet, which is salvation*.’” [Steven J. Cole]

B. Salvation doesn't just point to the future ~ a definite tactic of Satan

? If salvation was only meant to give us a ticket to eternity, what good would it do us now while we're still on earth? Do we *just sit around waiting*, living out our days until some future moment when the Lord returns or we go to heaven, whichever comes first? No, *salvation was meant to come with more than future benefits. It was also supposed to exert a startlingly clear impact on our present, daily life*. But this impact will only be experienced to the extent that we apply the benefits of salvation to our everyday lives. (Priscilla Shirer, *Armor of God*, p. 153)

C. Salvation for our past (Jn. 3:16; 3:3; Rom. 5:1; Jn. 10:28~29)

1. It's not just an event or a past experience

2. The warfare: Satan tries to undermine your salvation

? If a person is *unsure of his own salvation* then it is *difficult for him to stand firm against the enemy in combat* for he does not realize whether or not he will be assured of victory and whether or not God will be for him in this battle. (no author)

? “Satan seeks to *destroy* a believer’s assurance of salvation with his weapons of *doubt and discouragement*. (John MacArthur, *Study Bible*, p. 1769)

3. Be grounded in God’s word (Jn. 10:28~29)

? Jesus: “I give them eternal life, & they’ll never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand. 29 My Father, who gave them to me, is greater than all. No one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand.” (Jn. 10:28-29) Note: *Eternal life* (Jn. 10:28) by definition can never be taken away...[ESV]

D. Salvation for our present (Rom. 5:10; 12:2)

1. We are saved by Christ’s life on an ongoing basis

? “If, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, then how *much more*, having been reconciled, *will we be saved by his life*.” (Rom. 5:10) Note: Since Christians are now reconciled to God through Christ’s death, they can be assured that they will be saved on the day to come (here ‘*saved*,’ Gk. *sōzō*?, includes not only justification at the start of the Christian life but also completed sanctification, glorification, freedom from final condemnation, & future rewards)...Here the salvation is based on his life. The reference is to Christ’s resurrection. [ESV]

2. The warfare:

? “*Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind*, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, & perfect will of God.” (Rom. 12:2) Note: The present evil age [*this age*] still threatens those who belong to Christ, so they must resist its pressure. Their lives are changed as their minds are made new, so that they are able to ‘discern’ God’s will. [ESV]

a) Do what everyone else is doing ~ ‘This age’ places importance on image, busyness, productivity, celebrity, independence, superficial happiness, You Do You! ~ we need salvation as a helmet to guard our minds from just following trends (Rom. 12:2)

b) Don’t do what everyone else is doing ~ shun all things ‘modern’ in fear of being conformed ~ we appear odd, prudish, & often become self righteous, thinking we’re better than others

3. Be renewed in your mind.

E. Salvation for our future—the ‘Hope of Salvation’ (1 Thess. 5:8~9; Phil. 1:6; Rom. 8:38-39; Tit. 2:13)

1. Not appointed to wrath, but to salvation (1 Thess. 5:8-9)

? “Who can separate us from the love of Christ?...I’m persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Rom. 8:35, 38-39) Note: “*I am persuaded...*” In Rom. 8:38-39 Paul answers the question he raised in Rom. 8:35 with absolute certainty that *nothing can ever* sever God’s people from his love...in Christ. [ESV]

? “I’m sure of this, that he who started a good work in you *will carry it on to completion* until the day of Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 1:6)

? “Since we belong to the day, let us be self-controlled & put on the armor of faith & love, & a *helmet of the hope of salvation*. 9 **For** God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thess. 5:8-9) Note: ‘For’ (5:9a) connects this verse with... the specific exhortation in 1 Thess. 5:8 to put on the helmet of hope. Paul...states [that]...the Thessalonians have nothing to worry about, because they are destined not for wrath but for salvation at the [Lord’s] second coming. [ESV]

? “Salvation must be conceived of as both *a present possession & a future reality and* 1 Thessalonians 5:9 *confirms the future dimension of our salvation*. ‘God’s wrath’ refers to his wrath...on the wicked in the day of Judgment...Believers are not appointed to receive wrath on the day of Judgment; instead we shall receive...salvation promised to us.” [Thomas R. Schreiner, *Race Set Before Us*, p. 50]

2. The ‘blessed/happy hope’ of Jesus’ return/second coming (Tit. 2:13)

? “We wait for the blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God & Savior, Jesus Christ.” (Tit. 2:13)

? “Here we have the ultimate hope. All of God’s redemptive promises consummated...Jesus will return...& bring us into the fullness of his kingdom where God will dwell with his people & his people will worship him with joy forevermore. This is why we look for ‘the blessed hope the appearing...’.” [J. R. Wilkes, *Hope-filled Life*, p. 42]

? “In Titus 2:13 the verb *prosdechomai* means ‘to await’ [or] ‘to anticipate,’ since it pertains here to looking forward to some event [that’s] certain to take place. Here it is used of anticipating the appearing of Jesus Christ at the rapture or resurrection...which is characterized by *transcendent happiness*...beyond comprehension... [In the grammatical] construction this adjective [Gk.: *makarios*: blessed, happy] is receiving greater emphasis than the noun *elpis* [‘hope’] it’s modifying.” [Bill Wenstrom, *Exegesis & Exposition of Tit. 2:12-13*, pp. 32, 43]

? Note: Greek: *makarios*: blessed, *happy* (Reinecker)

3. The warfare: Fear the future

a) Overcomer or reward and punishment

b) Purgatory

c) Terrors of *Revelation* ~ Will I be raptured? Will I experience these plagues & natural catastrophes?

4. Be grounded in God’s Word

IV. Our Salvation & Inheritance

- “The helmet of salvation is *representative* of the high value items that are ours ‘in him’ ~ our *inheritance* in Christ. Choosing not to wear the helmet of salvation means leaving our mind

exposed, unprotected, like people who don't even own a helmet." (Priscilla Shirer, *Armor of God*, p. 159)

- A. I am a **child** of God (Jn. 1:12)
- B. I am **helped** by God (Heb. 4:16)
- C. I have **peace** with God (Rom. 5:1)
- D. I am **reconciled** to God (Rom. 5:11)
- E. I am God's **Masterpiece** (Eph. 2:10)
- F. I am **completely forgiven** (Col. 1:14)
- G. The Holy Spirit **lives in me** (1 Cor. 3:16)
- H. I am **not condemned** by God (Rom. 8:1)
- I. I have **access to God's wisdom** (Jms. 1:5)
- J. I have **Christ's righteousness** (Rom. 5:19)
- K. I have been **adopted** as God's child (Eph. 1:5)
- L. I am a **member** of Christ's body (1 Cor. 12:27)
- M. I have been **made complete** in Christ (Col. 2:10)
- N. I am **chosen** by God, **holy** and dearly **loved** (Col. 3:12)
- O. I **cannot be separated** from the love of God (Rom. 8:35)
- P. I have **direct access** to God through the Holy Spirit (Eph. 2:18)
- Q. I am **born** of God, and the evil one cannot touch me (1 Jn. 5:18)
- R. I am assured that **all things are working together for good** (Rom. 8:28)
- S. I may **approach God** with boldness, freedom, and confidence (Eph. 3:12)
- T. I have been **rescued** from Satan's domain & **transferred** into the kingdom of Christ (Col. 1:13)

V. An Unhealthy Thought Life

- "Research shows that 75-98% of mental, physical, & behavioral illness comes from one's thought life." (Jennie Allen, *Get out of your head*, p. 6)
- "The *health of your mind* has everything to do with your overall *ability to function properly*, both emotionally and behaviorally. If your mind's thought processes are unhealthy & toxic, your emotions & actions will expose it. Poisonous thinking will also cripple your ability to clearly detect the leading of God Spirit...When your mind isn't thinking like someone who wears salvation, your conscience fails to turn in the direction of the Spirit's conviction. The enemy's

lies, when believed, short-circuit & distort your ability to hear God's voice clearly & respond accordingly. (Priscilla Shirer, *Armor of God*, p. 162)

- A. I am unworthy.
- B. I am unloved.
- C. I am incapable.
- D. I am undesirable.
- E. I am Unforgivable.
- F. I am unknown.
- G. My life is insignificant.
- H. I am a mistake.
- I. I can lose my salvation.

VI. Our Battle Plan

- A. Think on good things (Phil. 4:8 CSB & MSG)

? “Finally brothers & sisters, whatever is *true*, whatever is *honorable*, whatever is *just*, whatever is *pure*, whatever is *lovely*, whatever is *commendable*—if there is any *moral excellence* & if there is anything *praiseworthy*—dwell on [think about; keep thinking] these things.” (Phil. 4:8)

? “You’ll do best by *filling your minds & meditating on* things true, noble, reputable, authentic, compelling, gracious—the best, not the worst; the beautiful, not the ugly; things to praise, not...to curse” [Phil. 4:8 (MSG)]

- B. Take thoughts captive (2 Cor. 10:3-5)

? “Although we live in the flesh, we do not wage war according to the flesh, 4 since the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but are powerful through God for the demolition of strongholds. We demolish arguments 5 & 4 every proud thing that is raised up against the knowledge of God, & we take every thought captive to obey Christ.” (2 Cor. 10:4-5) **Note:** Paul is not waging a fleshly battle but a spiritual one. The weapons of his warfare are not physical but spiritual, such as prayer, the Word of God, faith, & the power of the Holy Spirit. [ESV]

1. Identify toxic thought patterns – “strongholds that, along with the enemy, you’ve assisted in constructing within your mind” (Priscilla Shirer, *Armor of God*, p. 166)

2. Confess errant thought processes to God and accept your part in helping construct strongholds in your life

? “*Our strongholds are not all the enemy’s fault*. Every time we’ve nursed and rehearsed illegitimate thinking, we’ve added another concrete brick to the construction of a stronghold. Whether those thoughts are in relation to *doubt, fear, insecurity, salacious imaginations*, or something else entirely, *rehearsing the enemy’s lies* made us in essence a partner with the

enemy in building up a fortress that has held us captive.” (Priscilla Shirer, *Armor of God*, pp. 166~7)